

Appendix 7: National Historic Preservation Act Consultation: Letters Requesting Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement

H4217 (YOSE)
L7617

Dr. Knox Mellon
State of California
Office of Historic Preservation
Post Office Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

Reference: Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Yosemite Fire Management Plan

Dear Dr. Mellon:

We are requesting your review and comment on the draft Yosemite Fire Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (enclosed), pursuant to the park's 1999 Programmatic Agreement. This plan is a revision of that identified in Stipulation B of the Programmatic Agreement, YOSE Fire Management Plan. This revised plan discusses management actions that have the potential to adversely affect historic properties, and recommends cultural resources treatments to mitigate these potential effects. We are proposing that the treatments identified as mitigating measures in this Fire Management Plan form the basis of park-specific guidelines pursuant to Stipulation A of the PA, and would appreciate specific comment in this regard.

The draft Yosemite Fire Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement presents four alternatives (including no action) that propose to deal with the complex problems of fire hazard reduction in the wildland-urban interface, while protecting, restoring and maintaining the historic and natural systems that lie outside the development areas of the park. By considering the use of other treatments available for dealing with fuel accumulations, in conjunction with proven methods that have been in use for three decades, we feel that restoration can be accomplished in those areas that have suffered the most from vegetation encroachment, increasing forest density, and overprotection. Lastly, by basing our proposals on the target forest conditions that should be present, these alternatives propose only an appropriate level of work, in the appropriate places, to restore these conditions and reduce the threats from unwanted wildland fires.

A copy of the document was initially forwarded to your office in May, 2002; the formal public comment period ran through August 27, 2002. However, because of a personnel change that occurred during that timeframe, it appears that we failed to send you a cover letter requesting your comments on the draft Yosemite FMP/EIS. This time lapse will not be consequential to our efforts, and will permit us to discuss with you some of the modifications being considered as a result of comments received during the public comment period. Some of these changes will likely reduce the amount of equipment use outside of the wildland urban interface, thus reducing surface and ground disturbance and their potential affects upon unrecorded archeological resources. Treatment of previously unrecorded archaeological resources encountered during associated ground disturbance will follow section VII C (2)(2) (h) the 1999 Programmatic

Agreement (PA) among NPS, SHPO, ACHP regarding planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance.

If it would be helpful, we would be delighted to come to your offices and make a presentation on the YFMP/EIS. Or, if it would be more convenient, we could discuss it with you or your representative by conference call.

Should you have questions concerning the draft Environmental Impact Statement, please contact either Jerry Mitchell, Special Assistant to the Superintendent, at (303) 969-2219, or Mr. Tom Nichols, Fire Management Officer, at (209) 372-0325. For questions concerning historic preservation, please contact Ms. Jeannette Simons, Historic Preservation Officer and Native American Liaison, at (209) 379-1372.

Sincerely,

Michael Tollefson
Superintendent

Enclosures:

(1) Draft Yosemite Fire Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement

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Dr. Don Klima
Attn: Ms. Jane Crissler
Director, Office of Planning and Review
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
12136 West Bayaud Avenue #330
Lakewood, CO 80226

Dear Dr. Klima:

Attached is a copy of the Draft Yosemite Fire Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement, for your information, per our existing programmatic agreement.

Should you have any questions about the plan, please contact Mr. Jerry Mitchell, at (303) 969-2219.

Sincerely,

Michael Tollefson
Superintendent